

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-31 are currently being prosecuted. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the restriction requirement in view of the remarks as set forth hereinbelow.

The Examiner has set forth a restriction requirement with regard to claims 1-31. The grouping of the claims is set forth as follows:

GROUP	CLAIMS	CLASSIFICATION
I	1-19 and 25-31	Class 165, Subclass 104.12
II	20-24	Class 29, Subclass 890.06

Applicants have elected Group I consisting of claims 1-19 and 25-31 for initial examination. However, it is respectfully submitted that the restriction requirement is improper in view of the fact that no serious burden is presented to the Examiner to consider all of the claims in a single application.

As set forth in Section 803 of the MPEP, the Examiner must examine an application on the merits if the examination of the entire application can be made without serious burden. Two criteria are identified for a proper requirement for restriction:

1. The inventions must be independent or distinct as claimed; and
2. There must be a serious burden on the Examiner if the restriction is not required.

Applicants respectfully submit that a serious burden has not been placed on the Examiner to consider all of the claims in a single application. A review of the subject matter set forth in claims

1-19 and 25-31 would include a review of class 165, subclass 104.12 and class 29, subclass 890.06. Thus, a different field of search really does not exist with regard to the claims of the present application.

In order to be responsive to the Examiner's restriction requirement, claims 1-19 and 25-31 have been initially elected. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the restriction requirement and act on all of the claims in the present application. If the Examiner does persist in the restriction requirement, the right to file a divisional application directed to the non-elected claims at a later date, if desired, is reserved.

CLAIM FOR PRIORITY

The Examiner is respectfully requested to acknowledge Applicants' claim for foreign priority in the next Office Action.

DRAWINGS

The Examiner has not approved the Formal Drawings submitted by the Applicants. It is respectfully submitted that the drawings comply with the requirements of the USPTO. If the Examiner has any objections to the Formal Drawings he is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned as soon as possible so that appropriate action may be taken. No further action is believed to be necessary at this time unless the undersigned receives a notice from the Examiner.

Reply dated January 7, 2005
Reply to O.A. dated October 7, 2004

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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The Examiner is respectfully requested to acknowledge the Information Disclosure Statements filed on May 24, 2001 and August 24, 2001. The Examiner should initial and return the PTO-1449 forms attached to the Information Disclosure Statements.

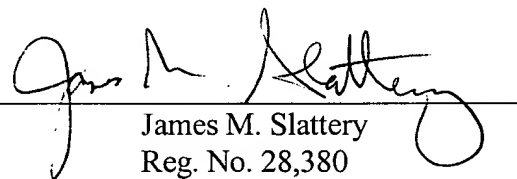
Favorable action on the present application is earnestly solicited.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), Applicant(s) respectfully petition(s) for a one (1) month extension of time for filing a reply in connection with the present application, and the required fee of \$120.00 is attached hereto.

Please charge any fees or credit any overpayment pursuant to 37 CFR 1.16 or 1.17 to Deposit Account No. 02-2448.

Respectfully submitted,

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